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Agenda item 16

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND DECADE
TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Letter dated 13 February 1991 from the Permanent Representative of
the United States of America to the United Nations Office at Geneva,
addressed to the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights

On 8 February 1991, during the afternoon session of the Commission, the representative of Syria made repeated approving references to the profoundly racist, anti-Semitic, and calumnious allegation that members of the Jewish faith have engaged in the ritual murder of Christians, including children, to use their blood in the preparation of the unleavened bread of the Passover feast.

Such statements, absurd and patently false, are historical incitements to prejudice and violence. We had thought that they had been relegated to the ashcan of history. They have no place in this Commission. They offend the decorum of this body and damage the credibility of its work. We deeply regret that the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, which is dedicated to ending intolerance toward any religious, racial, or ethnic group, was the venue for the expression of such crude and hateful allegations.

We assume that the statements made by the Representative of Syria do not reflect the views of the Government of Syria.

J. Kenneth Blackwell
U.S. Representative

(Signed)

Morris B. Abram
Ambassador